776 sometimes as a *bulto* (indistinct form) which whistles to people and gets them to follow it until they are lost in the woods. One informant, named Juan, said he had been seized in the Cerro del Aire and was able to escape only by recommending himself to the patron saint, San Juan. Otherwise he would have fallen in a cave where the devil could have seized him.

[556] In Urén in La Cañada it is said that the miriŋgua appears where money has been hidden. If someone gets rich suddenly it is said that "he has encountered the miriŋgua." The miriŋgua is also said to appear in the shape of dog or cat, but these are really disguised witches.

756 When houses are repaired or reconditioned, it is customary to hang up flowers, usually fastening the flowers to strings which are looped over doorways and windows. The practice was said to be customary and no beliefs concerning it could be discovered.

782 789 When the rains are late in coming in May, the image of one of the saints is taken to the top of the Sierra San Marcos, south of town. There the image is raised up and down several times and *cohetes* are fired. Even sceptics admit it usually rains soon after this; some of the naive attribute the rain to the *cohetes*, others to the proximity of the rainy season.

821 When the mountain of Pilón, east of town, has mist on top, it is going to rain, say many. The early rains come from the direction of Pilón, the later from the direction of San Marcos.

787 825 If people are seated and a dog comes and howls, some misfortune may befall the people. The coyote has magical power over animals. If he just gives himself a shake, the chickens will walk over to him and let themselves be eaten.

A person who finds a dead deer in the mountains which he has not killed will have some misfortune befall his family. A son, brother, parent, etc., will certainly die, and there is no way of averting the misfortune.

If a coyote crosses the road in front of one, it is a sign some misfortune will occur.

A blue-bellied lizard found occasionally in Cherán is believed to be able to jump on a person's back without his knowing it and burrow inside. It leaves a blue lizard mark on the

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825 back where it enters, but no further beliefs
787 could be discovered.

An animal said to be unique in Cherán is the *hachoque* or ečékurita. It resembles a lizard and is spotted black and white. It lives in corners, inside the walls of houses, or in the stone pillars. It does not bite or injure people, but it is believed to suckle the breasts of nursing mothers while they are sleeping, taking all the milk. The animal cannot be killed with blows or by cutting it up, for the pieces reunite. Only by burning it with coals can it be killed.

823 A very clever man once went up on San Marcos and struck the mountain. Water poured out, creating a *barranca*, and continued for several days until the plain west of town was covered several feet deep. The priest then went up the mountain and ordered the water to stop, which it did.

821 Against hurricanes and hail, a cross is made
263 in the patio or the street, of ashes, taken from
789 the household fireplace. Salt is not put in the fire for this purpose.

[text continues on top of p. 163b]

THE INDIVIDUAL AND THE CULTURE

128 In the preceding sections the culture of Cherán has been treated primarily from its technological and institutional aspects. The position of individuals and their activities have been discussed, it is true, but the orientation has been toward generalized and institutionalized activities. In the following pages will be discussed the activities which are more directly individual in character. This is not to say that many of these activities are not institutionalized; certainly the wedding ceremonies, for example, are quite as institutionalized in character as the *mayordomía*. Nevertheless, the wedding is more closely related to the development of individual personal relationships. Emphasis in succeeding pages will be upon the crisis periods in the individual and upon the developmental and behavioral patterns in the intervals between crises.

It will be obvious in the following discussion that treatment of the role of the individual in the culture and the impact of the culture upon the individual is very incomplete. Particular weaknesses are apparent in the discussion of infancy

[text continues on middle of p. 163b]

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539 644 173 Fearing his brothers, especially Tanimaranscua, he gave orders that they be killed and the deed was done. The bodies of the murdered princes were still warm when the grief-stricken Sesihángari, with her hair flying in wild disorder, hurriedly took a torch and set fire to the palace where the bodies lay. Tongues of fire darted about and covered the regal mansion. The ceiling gave way, permitting the black smoke to rise heavenward and thereby making the sinister spectacle more awesome.

Among the leaping flames the onlookers saw Sesihángari embracing the body of her beloved Tanimaranscua. Before the horrified eyes of all, their two bodies were consumed in the flames. Thus were the two unified souls released in love and carried heavenward.

For centuries the Purépecha people remembered the terrible sight of the beautiful, grief-stricken princess.

THE DIVINE INCHÁTIRO

Historical Comment

173 539 787 [171] The folklore of the Indians of Mexico and Central America in pre-Conquest times referred to unusual omens—comets, burning temples, and dreams—which warned of the arrival of a strange people. The Tarascans were not exceptional in this respect [643] (Ramirez, 1903, pp. 11-12). King Zuangua at the nerve center of [631] the empire in Tzintzuntzan and his vassal princes at Tingambato, [645] Coyucán, and elsewhere were sitting in their political offices, fearful lest the sands of time were running out for the Tarascans.

173 539 [487] In the legend of Inchátiro those uneasy times are brought back like a breath of the past. Tingambato, the home of Camachuén, was, and still is, an important stopping point on a trail leading from La Sierra southeast to the Tierra Caliente (Fig. 1).

175 539 618 Since the time of Tariácuri at the beginning of the fifteenth century, the Tarascans and Aztecs fought over the Tierra Caliente (Fig. 2).[2] The Matlaltzincas, sometimes called Pirindas, were said to have aided the Tarascans against the Aztecs. For this assis-

[2] [See Category 116, P. 5 -- Analyst]

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tance the Malaltzincas were granted a large area between Tacámbaro and Huetamo. The word Huetamo itself is Matlaltzinca, and there is still a "Pirinda" barrio (ward) in the town (Osborne, 1943, p. 61).

Clearly discernible are elements of Spanish Catholic acculturation in the dream portion of the legend. Also evident is the philosophical rationalization of a conquered people who had to accept and adjust to alien rule for an indefinite time into the future.

The Legend

The first morning rays illuminated the sky over Tingambato. It was the month of *duari* in the year of *ocelotl*. Three small cloudlets had just finished bathing the corpulent *ocote* trees and the sighing pines with a light rainfall.

The yellow-like dust of this land was unfertile, whereas in days long past it had been the site of great forests and immense meadows covered with exuberant vegetation, wild and fruitful. Formerly the jaguar had stalked here among the undergrowth; the timid *cú* bird had rendered his monotonously doleful notes; and, above all, the hummingbird (Tzintzún), the divine bird of the Tarascans, had sung his gorgeous melodies as if in offering to the god Curicaueri.

The day was fresh and all of nature was awakening. Over in the distance, mountain tops were running in and out of the shadows, just as in a dream of long ago hope had run its path of illusions. Camachuén was dreaming of those faraway things of the spirit, of those faraway things of love, where love was losing to hopelessness.

Camachuén (the protected of the gods), king of Tingambato, was thoughtfully walking in his garden which was filled with trees and flowers. There had been no calamity concerning his people which could be bothering him, nor was he concerned with Irichacuara, king of Pátzcuaro, with whom he had fought in times past. Furthermore, both King Characu, king of the Matlatzincas

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(Pirindas), and the Tarascan Emperor Calzonzin were at peace with their powerful armies. Camachuén's preoccupation on this day was with something greater and more profound. Camachuén was thinking about the divine Inchátiro, Queen of Xicalán (which means "the grace of the gods").

He was terribly disturbed because the hour had come when the villages of his people would be destroyed and his gods thrown from the temples. His race, the race of the Purépecha—descendants of King Tariácuri—had defied time and distance, sea and enemies, to place their homes on the edge of the deep blue waters of Tzirahuén, where they had erected a monument in memory of King Tziragu. But now the time had arrived when his people would wander alone among the mountains like driven beasts, because the children of the Sun would come from the east to conquer his people, take away their lands, destroy their homes, and smash their gods.

What would happen to his divine Inchátiro? In vain he had visited the sanctuary of Tazcapu [Zacapu] and made offerings to the god Curicaueri. Many mornings at daybreak he had prostrated himself in the midst of the forest and begged for the protection of the god of the sky, but without results. Camachuén remained grief-stricken.

Three moons passed. The dry leaves fell from the tall pines and all of nature was entering into a śad sleep. At last the prophecy of Guiapara, the high priest of Tzintzuntzan, was to occur. At first Camachuén thought it would be better to order his people to take arms and defend themselves until death released them. But he relented and decided to comply with the will of the gods. In tearful anguish he thought of the misery, hunger, and slavery which the future generations of his people would have to undergo. Only the Father of the Indians could know how tormented he was.

Another gloomy day arrived and Camachuén had not seen his beloved Inchatiro. He took the road to Xicalán and arrived at the palace still sad and pensive, thinking of the destiny which the gods had reserved for his people.

"Why are you sad?" asked Inchátiro wonderingly. "What sin-

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ister grief afflicts you?"

The unhappy Camachuén replied, explaining to her that the gods had become angry with the people and were going to punish them. Above all, he feared for her. Then, unburdening his heart to her, he related the following dream which Curicaueri had revealed to him:

> I saw you reigning in your palace, divinely beautiful as always. Your gardens were covered with multi-colored flowers. All the people of Xicalán were paying tribute to you. The aroma of the fresh flowers and breezes from the fields passed through your balcony, caressing you. The gods, envious of your virtues, were watching your virginal heart, and they learned that you always thought of me ... and after that ... a shadow, black as night, covered my dream, and everything was horrible.
>
> The white men had arrived and invaded our villages and your palace. There, in your quarters, a stranger was living and you were caressing him, giving him your love and, finally, your heart. You had forgotten the oath taken before the altar of our gods. You had forgotten the hatred existing between our race and theirs. I did not raise my knife to kill the stranger, because the gods detained my hand, saying that such an act was not mine by right to do.
>
> And then my soul, wandering among the dark shadows of the night, wrote in letters of light upon your heart the phrase LOVE AND HOPE. Love and hope, that is the pathway of life which enables us to reach the abode of our gods. Love those who suffer, for they are our brothers; hope is their redemption. On the road of life must be planted our deepest sorrow in future hope.
>
> Remember that all have the right to live, and that a tenth of our good fortune must be shared with those who are hungry and needy.
>
> Remember that if you have bread, the poor do not have bread; that if you have good fortune, the

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poor have only pain and sorrow. The poor is our brother; the rich is our master. Love the poor; he is of our race. The rich is the foreigner; he pays us with sarcasm and jokes. Remember always that he who suffers and cries needs your help. These are the maxims of love.

THE LEGEND OF TACAMBA

Historical Comment

All the drainage of southwestern Michoacán is southward to the Balsas river, the heart of the tropical region. This area was in pre-Spanish times seemingly under Tarascan domain (Osborne, 1943). Coyucán, mentioned in the legend of Tacamba as being one of the seats of Tarascan power at the beginning of the sixteenth century, is probably the town of Coyuca, a scant thirty-five miles south of present Huetamo (Fig. 2). At the time of the Conquest it was still an area of dispute between the Tarascans and the Aztecs, although both sides were temporarily at peace.

The wars between the Tarascans and Aztecs over this area accounted in large part for the refusal of Siguangua and Tzimtzicha to lend Tarascan support to the Aztecs against the Spaniards, thereby enabling the conquistadores to defeat both empires separately.

Tacamba, like Camachuén of the preceding legend, was one of the vassal princes of the Tarascan empire under King Siguanga and Tzimtzicha, his successor, at the time of the coming of the Spaniards. The death of Siguangua is accurately preserved in the body of the legend. In the first year of the Spanish arrival on the borders of Michoacán, smallpox and dysentery brought by Spanish messengers struck the Tarascan capital killing the king and his chief priests. The epidemic continued to take a terrible toll among the native population, weakening the Tarascans for the Spanish Conquest.